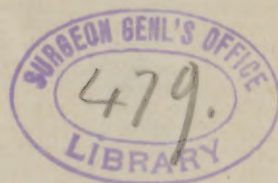


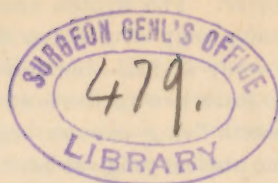
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HEALTH
AND
HAPPINESS.

By C. G. DAVIS M.D.,
CHICAGO.

An Address delivered at the Commencement
of the National Temperance Hospital
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It is the cry of the human soul, from the cradle to the grave, "How can I be happy?" On what more appropriate occasion can we ask this than to-night, when we stand with these young women at the commencement of their professional career, hoping and praying that happiness may attend them? Let us then briefly consider the essentials of human happiness.

We are living in an age of rapid and progressive thought. Turning back through the pages of the world's history to the farthest reach of written record and legend, we find that civilizations have repeatedly come and gone, each in its turn marking a step upward in the march of progress, which is leading mankind ever toward the heights of perfection. But never in the history of human life, has scientific research delved so far, and brought to light facts so rapidly, as during the last few decades. As "clouds are dispersed by the rising sun," so the mysticisms of the past are swept away by the light of truth. The human family is coming up out of the depths on to the heights—out of darkness into the light—out of wretchedness, ignorance and despair, into happiness, knowledge and peace. Each new fact evolved is another drop to swell the great ocean of truth. And in this growth, or development, lies the secret of the highest happiness. Disease, sin, and sorrow are simply the children of ignorance, while health, happiness and goodness are the offspring of knowledge.

Notwithstanding the pessimistic views of some, whose opinions are influenced by the narrow boundaries of their mental horizon, the world *is* growing better. Humanity, as a whole, is far superior, mentally and physically, than it was during the period of the

Roman Empire. The written and legendary history of man is brief, extending only over a few thousand years. Humanity is still young—only a child—but developing rapidly. We are just beginning to learn how to live—we are just beginning to realize that life is worth living—we are beginning to respect the human body. Some ancient religions have taught that it was ennobling to scourge the body, to crucify the flesh. I most emphatically dissent from this view, and call to witness, that the history of the last few centuries has shown that the happiness of the human race has progressed only as we have directed our care to the body. We read to-day, with horror, of the pollution and filth to be found in every street of the cities of two centuries ago. We turn pale, when we are told of the spread of plagues and epidemics, that swept over the land, without a single rational attempt being made to stay their progress, till they had numbered their tens and hundreds of thousands of victims. We are indignant when we behold the accumulated superstition and ignorance, that for thousands of years held men in bondage, and prevented the proper development of beauty and intelligence, for nature undoubtedly intended that man should be both beautiful and happy. Any variation from this condition is the result of direct or indirect violation of Nature's laws. Nature is stern in her edicts—her laws cannot be violated with impunity. If a man walk off the top of a five-story building, he violates a law of gravity, and the result is, he is hurled with great violence to the street below and killed. The penalty is no less certain when he violates a physiological law. If he take into his stomach, irritating or indigestible food, he will suffer pain, distress, and a constitutional disturbance, in proportion to the local disease. If he saturate his system with alcohol and tobacco, he will find that the normal functions of his various organs are impaired, in direct ratio, to the amount of poison absorbed and the ability of his body to resist. If excretion be not perfect, so that the old and worn-out particles of the body can be carried away, then we have an obstruction, the body becomes poisoned by its own waste material, and the man is ill. If good, nutritious food be not daily supplied, we have loss of mental and physical strength. If we do not avoid extremes of heat and cold, we have local congestions and inflammations, which, if extensive or severe, may result in death. If the mental

faculties be overtaxed, the brain grows tired and refuses to respond with healthy thought. Now, how can a man be happy while paying the penalty of these violated laws? He cannot—he is ill, and suffers. Through these physiological errors, we not only bring suffering to ourselves, but may transmit it to our offspring, and send it down through numbers of generations. How many thousands are to-day struggling under the heavy bonds enjoined upon them through an unfortunate physical inheritance? It is an almost daily occurrence at my office, to see innocent children suffering from the effects of inherited disease. Many of the so-called cases of scrofula, salt rheum, bad blood, etc., are often the results of disease transmitted from parent to child. The nurse, as well as the physician, should know something of the laws of inheritance, for the effects are seen on every side, and they are potent factors, threatening the destruction of civilization.

Of recent years, attention is being called to the effects of tobacco on the human system. Nicotine, as is well known, is a powerful poison. One drop on the tongue of a dog is sufficient to produce death in a few minutes. And yet, a man will continue for years to introduce this poisonous substance into his system, paralyzing his nerve centres, and weakening the power of his heart. At a recent examination of applicants to the naval academy, more than one-half of some forty, who applied, were rejected, owing to a diseased condition of the heart, brought on from cigarette smoking. What an astounding fact this is, and how doubly terrible it becomes, when we are told these were mere youths, averaging in age scarcely more than sixteen years.

Again, shall we stop here to enumerate the ravages that are now being made by the action of alcohol on humanity? Is not this one of the most potent causes of poverty, sickness and crime? Can anything be more pitiful than the slavery which holds mankind enthralled by this terrible enemy? Suppose for a moment, that it were possible to wipe out all of the baneful effects of alcohol on the human family—what a burden would be lifted! What crimes, vice, poverty and despair would be swept away! Jails and penitentiaries would hardly be known, insane asylums would not be so crowded, many forms of disease would entirely disappear, poverty and rags would be replaced by beautiful homes and smiling faces, courts of justice would want for litigants, the aver-

age length of life would increase, and the greatest hinderance to the march of civilization would be swept aside.

But we are learning. Many do not yet know how to dress. How many thousands in this city are now, this very evening, laying the foundation of disease and early death, through errors in dress? No flannel next the skin—no overshoes or rubbers—no wraps or overcoats—low-neck dresses, leaving chest and neck exposed to the draughts of the cold spring air, trying, with all the apparant ingenuity they can devise, to contract pneumonia, bronchitis, and hurry into consumption.

Again, how few know how important it is to protect the feet. If the blood pass from the heart to the lower extremities, and there becomes chilled, on its return it carries the cold with it and chills the entire body. Once a very able man, when asked to what he attributed his good health in his old days, replied, "To my overshoes." Many a time, I have beheld a well-dressed woman, with the upper part of her body protected with a warm sealskin jacket, while she waded through snow with feet clad in lisle-thread stockings and delicate shoes, as thin as paper, without the slightest excuse of an overshoe or rubber. And yet, such a woman will bewail the fate that afflicts her with backache, rheumatism, neuralgia, and toothache. Such thoughtless creatures form a large class of those chronic invalids who fill the offices of physicians. They are always ill, for it is simply impossible for them to recover, and sometimes I am inclined to believe that the average intelligence of the community is raised when they die.

We are forced to confess that civilization does not always civilize. We laugh at the Chinese who compress their feet, and yet it would be more appropriate if we wept over our own folly in compressing the waist. What anathemas can I use? What can I say of that modern nineteenth century instrument of torture—the corset? What folly! What barbarism in the midst of civilization! How long shall it endure? When will intelligence take the place of ignorance? But there are signs of advancement. Let us hope that Mrs. Jenness-Miller has come to stay.

Sleep is another of the great essentials to good health. As a rule, it is safe to say that eight hours should be given to labor, eight hours to recreation, and eight hours to sleep. Of course,

there are exceptions to the rule specifying the number of hours necessary to each individual, but *eight* may be said to be the average amount necessary for a healthy adult. During sleep the nervous system is restored to its wonted vigor and freshness. It is then that we "knit up the ravelled sleeve of care," and prepare ourselves for the warfare of another day. If sufficient sleep be not obtained, the strongest nature will in a short time succumb. I have no doubt, but in many instances, valuable lives have been shortened and sacrificed for the want of sufficient sleep.

Labor—work may also be mentioned as one of the essentials of health and happiness. Every muscle, bone, joint and sinew of the human body shows that man's normal condition is not one of rest, but of motion. Eternal activity from the cradle to the grave is necessary for the full endowment of mind and body.

But our forces should not all be applied to work. As before stated, in every twenty-four hours there should be eight hours given to recreation. "Why should life all labor be?" During recreation the bow should be unbent, and the thoughts and motions be permitted to run into new channels. The American people are not sleeping and recreating enough. They are a vast army of hollow-cheeked, pallid-faced, nervous beings, hurrying with quickened breath, as they struggle up the incline leading to the goal of ambition and wealth. This hurry must cease, or, as a nation, we are doomed. All that saves us to-day is the quiet, sluggish peasant blood that is poured into our veins from foreign countries. I am not sure but that it would be well, for the ultimate prosperity of the American people, to let the Chinese come in.

Steady labor, tempered with sleep and recreation, does not kill. It is the hurry and friction that destroy, and it is true, "Worry is the rust that corrodes both the mind and body." If we would be happy the mind must be tranquil. This great unrest and disquiet, connected with many occupations, lead to disease and early death. I do not hesitate to say, that I do not believe there is a single healthy man actively engaged to-day on the Chicago Board of Trade.

It is now a matter of almost weekly observation, that some young man, apparently full of life, hope and ambition, is prostrated with sudden illness, which quickly results fatally, or leaves his mind so shattered as to make him a fit subject for an insane asylum

or infirmity. The stereotyped diagnosis is apoplexy, heart failure, paresis, etc., but the truth is, he committed suicide through the violation of Nature's laws.

We have of late years been learning many useful lessons in relation to the sanitary condition of our homes. From the mansion of the rich to the hovel of the poor, the idea is being impressed that plenty of fresh air is essential to good health. Yet, in the poorer districts, it seems difficult to put the idea into practical use. But a short time ago, I was called to see a case in the northern part of the city, where there is a large foreign population. I was guided up a pair of rickety stairs into the back room of a miserable tenement, where, in a space of ten feet by twelve, I found huddled together ten persons, besides the sick woman, who was suffering from typhoid fever. Every window and door was closed when I entered. The heavily-laden atmosphere was so tainted as to almost stifle me. The first thing I did was to walk to the window and open it. As I did so, a protest went up from the occupants of the room, who declared—as was translated by my guide—that they would all take cold and die, if the window was not closed. The uproar became so great that I had to threaten to bring a police officer to enforce my order, before they would consent to obey me. I ordered the window kept open day and night, till the patient recovered. Within twenty-four hours after this ventilation, the sick woman began to improve, the temperature subsided, the delirium ceased, appetite returned, and she rapidly recovered. But it is not always in the tenement houses, or among the poor, we find this neglect to supply pure air. In more pretentious homes, and also in the so-called first-class hotels, we often find the principles of ventilation overlooked, and many a pale face, nervous headache, and depressed nervous system, may be traced to breathing vitiated air.

The air of our sleeping apartments and living rooms may not only be vitiated from bad ventilation, but it may also be poisoned through the entrance of gases through imperfect and badly-ventilated waste pipes and sewers. Owing to leakage in waste pipes and obstructed sewers, the germs of disease are undoubtedly often introduced into homes that are otherwise models of cleanliness. I am sure that in this manner I have frequently seen typhoid fever and diphtheria make their appearance.

Some months ago I was summoned to an elegant and cultured home, to attend the youngest child. I found it suffering from malignant diphtheria. In two days another child had contracted the disease, and then another, and within a week a third child and the mother were all prostrated with this dreadful malady. To my frequent inquiries, the answer was always given that the plumbing of the house was perfect. But I insisted on an inspection of every pipe in the residence. I thought I could detect a slight odor of gas in the nursery. The waste-pipe leading from the story above passed between the walls. The partition was opened, and there a leak was discovered—a slight opening, not much larger than a pin, but sufficient to allow a constant escape of gas and fluid. This had probably been going on for a number of weeks. It was apparently an insignificant matter within itself, but it nearly cost the life of that beautiful mother and children. If such errors can occur in the homes of the wealthy, how much more severe must be the ravages of these diseases—how much greater their danger—in the tenement houses—the homes of the poor, where the neglect of sanitary measures is greatly increased. Let us trust the time will soon come when sanitary laws will be sufficient to compel landlords, and in fact all householders, to insure that every house shall be free from the contamination of these deadly poisons.

Bathing is another essential to health and happiness. A man rises in the scale of respectability after a bath. He feels grander and greater, and I am not sure but what the same might be said of a nation. Would it be too much to say that Rome owed her greatness to her public baths? Undoubtedly they had their influence in stimulating the nerve centers of the exquisite patrician, till he felt himself almost a god, when compared to the neighboring unwashed barbarian. Had Rome been as attentive to her morals as she was to personal charms, the nineteenth century would have seen that great empire still intact.

As a rule, it may be said that as intelligence and culture have advanced, bathing has increased in popularity. The most cultured nations have their numerous public and private baths, while the uncivilized tribes are noted for their inattention to matters pertaining to personal cleanliness. It might be doubted that in a civilized community like ours, an individual could be found who really never indulged in a bath. And yet there are such cases. I was

called upon by a patient—a gentleman of foreign birth—the other day. His finger nails were long and dirty, hair uncombed, face bloated, eyes red, tobacco juice oozing from the corners of his mouth, breath reeking with the odor of beer, and his general appearance indicative of not having recently made his toilet. I mildly inquired how frequently he bathed. Giving me a look of astonishment, he exclaimed, “Vat, me bate? Vy, I nefer dake a bate, ven I gatch gold.” And when I investigated farther I discovered he really could not remember ever having bathed. And I should judge by his appearance that he had no use for water, either externally or internally. Some humanitarian might tell us that he was too poor to bathe. But such was not the case, for undoubtedly one-half the sum he expended for beer and tobacco would have kept his person in a presentable condition. In his case it was simply a matter of pure ignorance and neglect. Personal liberty is a beautiful thing to talk about, but there is such a thing as having too much of it. I am in favor of not only compulsory education, but also of compulsory cleanliness. Every ward in this city should have its public bathing places, supported, as are the public schools, by a public tax, and then a municipal law should compel every individual to bathe at least twice every week.

I cannot leave this subject pertaining to the welfare of physical life, without saying something in regard to the moral condition necessary to good health and perfect happiness.

This address is not intended to be a sermon, for it deals most particularly with those influences which bear directly on our physical condition. But need I tell you, after what I have already said, that I do not believe a man can be healthy and at the same time immoral? Health means morality, and vice versa, morality means health. The two go hand in hand. Theorize all you may, but let me tell you that crime and vice are nothing more than the manifestations of disease. What was morality hundreds and thousands of years ago is not always morality now. The standard of moral life is ever on the rise, and a man to be symmetrical in his nature, must live up to the ideal heights of the age in which he is born. A man can not be a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde. If he attempts it, he will be destroyed by the warfare of his own nature. To concentrate the idea, I would say, that “a man must live in harmony with himself.” When his daily acts are in discord with

his recognized standard of right and wrong, nutrition fails, digestion is poor, assimilation is imperfect, the circulation is sluggish, the brain suffers from the want of nutrition, and the man is ill. This condition is worth noticing. It forms an interesting psychological study. Observe such an individual, and when the discord is removed—when the man ceases to violate his own sense of honor—when he is once more in harmony with himself, you will see the eye brighten, the color return to the faded cheek, the lips grow red, the digestion improve, the heart send the blood bounding to the extremities—he feels new life from his head to his fingertips. You would be astonished if you knew how many people are made ill and then again cured from the action of this mental law. There is much in the saying, “As a man thinketh, so is he.” I have seen an individual lose appetite and become seriously ill in a few moments on the receipt of bad news. I have seen the same cause produce an obstructed liver, inflammation and death, within a few days. From these observations we are made aware of the great influence which the mind has over our bodily condition. A tranquil, happy state of mind is necessary to perfect health.

But education is a great civilizer, and through this, in its broadest sense, are we to look for the happiness of the race. Knowledge will lead us to moral and physical health. Step by step, are we coming up out of the shadows of cave life into the light of truth. Truth is universal—limitless as space. One thought being born leads to another, and thus by an unbroken chain we descend into the dark abyss of nature and bring forth her hidden mysteries. A few years ago the whole world, with a small exception, revelled in alcoholic intoxication. Gradually the idea came that so much intoxication was not good. Then the advanced thinkers agreed that alcoholic beverages should be used only as a medicine. It was surprising then how many people got sick. Now the medical world is beginning to think it is not much of a medicine. The National Temperance Hospital declares that alcohol is not a food, and not essential as an active medicinal agent. This is not only affirmed, but it is being proven every day in the wards of the hospital. This institution has developed from a mere insignificant beginning till its influence is now being felt all over the United

States. It bids fair to become one of the most potent educators in the cause of truth.

And to these young women who graduate to-night, I would say: We expect much from you; we expect you to carry with you to the fields of labor the principles we have taught you here. The civilization in which we live is threatened with a great evil—the destructive action of alcohol on the human brain. From this cause the world is filled with poverty, disease and crime. We send you forth as forces to assist in stemming this awful destructive tide. I wish to-night to take you by the hand and say that I have confidence in you. For two years I have watched you at the bedside of human suffering. I have noted your bearing under most trying circumstances. I have seen you stand bravely at the post of duty, while the crimson tide followed the flash of the surgeon's knife. I have observed your tender solicitude as the pulse grew weak and the vital spark flickered low. And again, I have seen your faces light with joy, as hope returned, and the sufferer was called back from the very borders of shadowland. I have been with you in the silent watches of the night, while the world slept, and you were listening to the heart beats that told of the ebb or flow of human life. No task has been too severe—no duty too arduous—through patience, perseverance, and courage, you have won the victory. You are worthy of the honors we to-night confer upon you. The future is within your keeping. Let us trust that it may be full of work well done. Remember, there is an Omnipotent power that lies behind the physical manifestations of life. Listen ever to the Voice that said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

